Cultivation in low rainfed areas

152. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the functions/role of National Rainfed Area Authority;

(b) the details of the report of Parthasarthi Committee and its main recommendations;

(c) the steps taken by Government to implement those recommendations;

(d) the details of action taken by Government to increase production of crops in low rainfed areas;

(e) the achievement made, so far, in the country, particularly in Rajasthan; and

(f) how much additional land has been brought under plough?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) The functions/role of National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA), for development of rainfed areas of the country, are as follows:

(i) NRAA shall be an expert body to provide the much needed knowledge inputs regarding systematic up-gradation and management of country's Dryland and Rainfed Agriculture.

(ii) NRAA shall be an Advisory, Policy Making and Monitoring Body, it is charged with the role of examining guidelines in various existing schemes and in the formation of new schemes including all externally aided projects in the rainfed areas.

(iii) NRAA shall specially focus on issues relating to landless and marginal farmers who constitute the large majority of inhabitants of rainfed areas.

(iv) NRAA shall bring about convergence and synergy among the numerous ongoing programmes and shall advise, guide and monitor their progress.

(v) NRAA shall cover all aspects of sustainable and holistic development of rainfed areas including appropriate farming and livelihood system approaches.

(b) The Report of the Technical Committee under the Chairpersonship of Shri S. Parthasarthy on Watershed Programmes in India "From Hariyali to Neeranchal" can be viewed from the website http://www.dolr.nic.in/freport.htm.

The Parthasarthy Committee Report mainly deals with two major areas *viz.*,

- Proposed National Authority for Sustainable Development of Rainfed Areas (NASDORA).
- Neeranchal Guidelines for Watershed Development 2006.

The main recommendations of the Report are:

- Establishment of a National Authority for Sustainable Development of Rainfed Areas (NASDORA) as a quasi independent body to address various problems of

farming in the rainfed areas and to ensure a coordinated strategy for development of rainfed areas and to manage the entire primarily Central Government funded watershed programmes. At the state level also similar setup with independent CEO and professionals were proposed.

- A new set of Neeranchal guidelines for watershed development was also included as a Chapter in the Report. The Guidelines recommended specific institutional set up at National, State and District levels. An independent District Watershed Development Agency was recommended as the Nodal Agency at the district for all watershed programmes supported by Milli Watershed Council, Village Watershed Committee, Watershed Development Team etc. Milli Watershed Concept was proposed with size of watershed from 4000 to 10000 ha. A three phase implementation strategy spread over a project duration of 8 years namely, preparatory, resource augmentation and institutional building and watershed plus was recommended.
- The Committee proposed that the cost norm for the programme be raised to Rs. 12000 per ha and recommended for convergence of all other non land based programmes in the project area to enhance ultimate output and for sustainable economic development of the village committee

(c) Government of India has established the National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) to address various problems of farming in the rainfed areas and to ensure a coordinated strategy for development of rainfed areas. A Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Project have been issued with dedicated institutions at State, district and village levels for implementation of watershed projects. The sub watershed concept has been adopted with watershed dimension ranging from 1000 to 5000 ha comprising of clusters of micro watersheds. The cost norms for watershed development has also been enhanced upto Rs. 12000/ha. and in case of difficult hilly terrains the unit cost upto Rs. 15000/ha. may be adopted. The concept of three phases of project implementation has also been adopted in the new Common Guidelines.

(d) Government has accorded very high priority to the holistic and sustainable development of rainfed areas through integrated watershed management approach. Following major schemes are being implemented by Government to enhance soil and water conservation:-

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(i) National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA)

(ii) Soil Conservation for enhancing productivity of degraded lands in the catchments of River Valley Projects and Flood Prone River (RVP and FPR)

(iii) Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA)

Ministry of Rural Development

(iv) Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP): Integration and modification of the schemes of Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP), Desert Development Programme (DDP) and Integrated Wasteland Development Programme (IWDP)

Programmes like Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana and National Food Security Mission are also giving special emphasis for increasing the agricultural production in rainfed areas.

(e) An area of 50.8 million Ha. area has so far been covered through various watershed development programmes till the end of Tenth Five Year Plan in the country. In Rajasthan 1419, 410 micro watersheds have so far been developed and 286, 69 micro watersheds are ongoing in the Eleventh Five Year Plan under NWDPRA and RVP and FPR respectively by Ministry of Agriculture. Under the programmes of Ministry of Rural Development, 8775 projects have so far been sanctioned which include completed and ongoing watersheds.

(f) The assessment of actual land brought under plough in Rajasthan has not been made. However, the impact evaluations of watershed programmes have revealed that due to implementation of watershed interventions, additional land has been brought under productive use.

Use of low quality insecticides

†153. SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that crops amounting to the tune of about Rs. 25,000 crore are being destroyed every year in the country due to the use of low quality insecticides;

(b) if not, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has made sufficient arrangements to check the quality of insecticides in the country; and

(d) if so, the details of such arrangements along with the names of places where it has been made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) The estimates of value of crops lost due to use of low quality insecticides are not available with the Government. A news item published in the newspaper 'Business Standard' dated 22-09-2008 had mentioned annual crop loss worth Rs. 6,000 crore due to spurious pesticides.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Quality of pesticides is checked by the State Governments through regular drawal and analysis of pesticide samples by Insecticide Inspectors, Insecticide Analysts and Pesticide Testing Laboratories under the provision of the Insecticides Act, 1968. 21 States

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.